

Mr. HOMUTH: Not those in similar positions.

Mr. VIEN: But it must be remembered that in the Judges' Act there is a superannuation provision different from the Civil Service Superannuation Act.

Mr. HOMUTH: But they have not a choice of coming under the Judges' Act or the Civil Service Superannuation Act.

Mr. VIEN: The auditor general, not being a judge, had no choice but to take advantage of the superannuation act, of which the judges cannot avail themselves. They have an act of their own.

Mr. McNEVIN: I move, in amendment, that the amount of \$1,500, as annuity for the former auditor general, be reduced to one dollar.

Mr. STIRLING: Are there any other instances of retiring employees, who under the superannuation act have paid into this fund of superannuation, having been paid additional amounts to augment the amount of their pensions?

Mr. ILSLEY: I do not know about that.

Mr. RYAN: I do not know anything about the agreement made with Mr. Gonthier, but I am very well acquainted with him. I knew what he was doing in Montreal as an auditor, when he was appointed by the government. I have known this man for years, and I am confident that if he had not thought he was being appointed for life he would never have accepted the position. I knew him well enough to know what he was earning in Montreal. He would never have taken a position where the government at any time could discharge him. I believe that this amount of \$1,500 ought to be paid, in justice to this man, because I firmly believe he held the position with the thought that he had been appointed for life.

An hon. MEMBER: Appointed at a salary of \$7,000, and that salary continued for several years.

Mr. RYAN: I believe firmly that Mr. Gonthier would not have accepted a position as Auditor General of Canada for \$7,000 a year, because he was earning much more than that.

Mr. HOMUTH: Then why did he accept the position?

Mr. CASSELMAN (Grenville-Dundas): In order to have the record straight, on July 17, 1940, this question was asked in the House of Commons:

Have any other retired employees, under the superannuation act, been voted additional amounts?

[Mr. Edwards]

The answer to that question was, no. That means that this vote we are now asked to pass to-night places this man in a position different from that of any other man who has ever been in the employ of the government of Canada and comes within the provisions of the superannuation act.

Mr. ILSLEY: The ordinary person appointed to the civil service of Canada is appointed during pleasure.

Mr. HOMUTH: What is there so extraordinary about this appointment?

Mr. ILSLEY: He was appointed during good behaviour.

Mr. HARRIS (Danforth): What is the difference between appointment during pleasure and appointment during good behaviour?

Mr. ILSLEY: There is all the difference in the world. I will tell hon. members the difference, and illustrate by the experience of governments in England. One of the Stuart kings dismissed twelve judges because they were appointed during pleasure. He dismissed them because they gave judgments which did not appeal to him.

Mr. HOMUTH: That was in the time of the Stuarts; this is 1940.

Mr. ILSLEY: That was the very thing which gave rise to the demand by the English people that the tenure of judges must be during good behaviour, so as to put them beyond the reach of governments, and thereby make them independent of governments.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr. Jean): Does any other hon. member wish to speak on this item?

Mr. PURDY: Yesterday I received a letter from the Post Office Department stating that they must close certain post offices because they could not carry them on any longer. Last week I received a similar letter, and the week before a similar letter. The week before that, because they wanted to save expenses, they were going to close a mail route which served a large number of people. A day or so after that, they were going to close lighthouses because they did not have the money to carry on. Surely, if the government has not the money to carry on services for the good of the people in the rural districts, it cannot have the money to give an annuity of \$1,500 to this man.

Mr. ILSLEY: Before the vote is taken, I wish to repeat that every hon. member will act on his own responsibility in the matter. He is free to vote exactly as he pleases, without any intimation from anyone as to what he should do.